

Title:Dr Thomas Hancock Sworn In For The State, 116th To Testify
Category:LEO FRANK TRIAL BRIEF OF EVIDENCE

DR. THOMAS HANCOCK, sworn for the Defendant.

A doctor for 22 years. Engaged in hospital work 6 or 7 years.

Have treated about 14,000 cases of surgery. Have examined the private.

parts of Leo M. Frank and found nothing abnormal. As far as my
examination disclosed he is a normal man sexually. If a body is embalmed

about 8 or 10 or 12 hours after death, a gallon of the liquids of the body
removed, a gallon of embalming fluid, containing 8% formaldehyde

is injected, the body buried and a post mortem examination made at

the end of 9 or 10 days, and the doctor finds back of the ear a cut which
is

opened and which extends to the skull about an inch and a half long and

finds on the inside of the skull no actual break of the skull, but a
slight

hemorrhage under the skull corresponding to the point where the blow

had been delivered and there is no interference with the brain or any
pressure on brain, no doctor could tell that long after death whether or

not wound would have produced unconsciousness, because the skull may

be broken and considerable hemorrhage and depression occur without

any loss of memory even. There is no outside physical indication of any

sort that a man could find that can tell whether it produced
unconsciousness or not. If the body was found 8 or 10 or 12 hours after
death with that wound and some blood appears to have flowed out of the
wound, that wound could have been inflicted before or after death, the
blood might flow from a wound inflicted after death from one to six or
eight or ten hours by gravity. If the wound was made during life by a
sharp instrument I would expect it to bleed. A live body bleeds more than
a

corpse. If under the above conditions only a visual examination of the

lungs was made and no congestion was found, it could not be stated with

certainty whether or not the person died from strangulation. If in such

a subject I removed the stomach and found in it wheat bread and cabbage

partly digested like that (State's Exhibit " G"), and 32 degrees of acidity in the stomach and very little liquids or anything in the smaller intestine and feces some 5 or 6 feet further down, and if the stomach was taken from the body 9 days after death, after it had been embalmed with a preparation containing 8% formaldehyde, neither I nor anybody else could give an intelligent opinion of how long that cabbage and wheat bread had been in the stomach before death. The digestion of carbohydrates begins in the mouth. The more cabbage and wheat bread are masticated the more easily it is digested. Cabbage chewed like that (State's Exhibit "G") would take longer to digest. It is liable to stay in the stomach 3, 4 or 5 hours, and longer if it is stopped up by the pylorus,

and when food is not chewed thoroughly, it causes irritation and constriction, and so the stomach would retain the food longer.

Sometimes cabbage passes out of the body whole. No dependable opinion could be given as to the time that cabbage had been in the stomach from the conditions of acidity or lack of acidity, starch or the lack of starch, maltose or the lack of maltose. The conditions are too variable. A great many things retard digestion, such as excitement, anger and grief. Formaldehyde stops all fermented processes of the pancreatic juices, and after a body was embalmed with it I would not expect to find the pancreatic juices. It also destroys the pepsin, so that 10 days after death in the case of a body embalmed with formaldehyde no accurate

opinion could be given as to how long the cabbage (State's Exhibit" G") had been in the stomach. Each stomach is a law unto itself. Cooked cabbage is more difficult to digest than raw cabbage. I recently made tests with one man and four women with normal stomachs, giving them cabbage and wheat bread, and removing it from the stomach a little later to determine how the contents of the stomach looked. The first woman, age 22 (Defendant's Exhibit 88A) ate a loaf bread and cabbage, chewed

it well and vomited it 60 minutes later. She ate it at 12 o'clock approximately. It took her 9 minutes to chew it. None of them were supposed to have eaten anything since 6:30 o'clock that morning, but she

had drunk some chocolate milk at 9:30, and that gives this specimen the chocolate brown color. The next one (Defendant's Exhibit 88B) has in it the hot water and the entire vomit and embalming fluid added to it, that is formaldehyde. This cabbage was not well chewed, and looks like it did before it was eaten. She ate it at 5 minutes after 12, and it stayed in her

stomach 45 minutes. The next one (Defendant's Exhibit 88 D) was a man 25 years old. He did not chew his well. He ate it in 5 minutes. I took it from his stomach 1 hour and 15 minutes later. It was not digested.

This next one (Defendant's Exhibit 88 C) was a woman, aged 21. She chewed it well, and held it from 30 to 45 minutes. There seems to be something like tomatoes in it which she ate at 6:30 that morning. This last one (Defendant's Exhibit 88 E) was a woman, aged 25. She ate cabbage and bread. She did not chew it well, and kept it 2 hours and 28 minutes. You can see cabbage in there. No dependable opinion resulting from the condition of the contents of the stomach irrespective of acidity or the other chemical qualities as to how long cabbage and wheat

bread were in the stomach can be given where particles like that (State's Exhibit " G") are found. Where a young lady 13 or 14 years old died, her body is embalmed as above described, and a post mortem performed 9 or 10 days after death, and the physician finds epithelium detached from, the walls of the vagina in several places, nothing being visible to the naked eye and he takes several parts of the wall of the vagina away and examines them with a microscope and discovers that the blood vessels are congested, that is, there has been a hemorrhage in a number of instances, the blood from those microscopic vessels getting into tissues, the removal of the epithelium could be accounted for by the fact that there has been a digital examination the day after death by inserting the fingers, but in that length of time I would expect the epithelium to shed off. Finding the epithelium missing in several places or separated from

the wall of the vagina would not indicate any violence done to the subjects

in life. The condition of the blood vessels above described I would expect to result from other causes than violence. The embalming might force the blood through the small capillaries. If the subject had just had

her menstrual period and that had come back on her at about the time of death or before, that would account for those distended blood vessels and hemorrhage; but even if violence caused them, you could not tell how long before death that violence had been inflicted, or that it had been

inflicted within from 5 to 15 minutes before death. Death by strangulation

might have an effect on those blood vessels. If there was no more damage than what I have described I would say certainly there was no violence on the young woman. A bruise or discoloration could be produced on the eye or face any time before the blood coagulated utterly,

which may be as long as 8 or 10 or 12 hours after death. A blow on the back of the head can discolor the eye. Death can be produced by a blow on the outside of the head by concussion without any appreciable lesion on the outside of the head.